United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General says he is "encouraged" by developments in Middle East peace conference in Madrid.

- General Assembly takes up strengthening Humanitarian aid coordination; elects 19 members of Trade Law Commission.

- Legal Committee approves draft calling on States to act as good neighbours.

- Social Committee hears proposal by representative of Colombia for United Nations to draft international convention on reduction of demand for illicit drugs.

- Two-day meeting to focus on disadvantaged South Africans in humanitarian, social and development fields begins in Geneva.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has said that he is encouraged by developments over the past few days in the Middle East peace conference in Madrid.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents that the Secretary-General was awaiting the report by Edouard Brunner, his Special Representative for the Middle East, who is the United Nations observer at the conference.

In a separate development, the spokesman told correspondents that the Secretary-General had expressed concern over unconfirmed press reports indicating that 1991 Nobel Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar was either dead, in a coma or on a hunger strike.

On being awarded the Nobel Peace prize in October, the Secretary-General called Ms. Kyi a remarkable leader who had shown "great courage and a deep attachment to non-violence and democracy".

(more)

For information media—not an official record

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The General Assembly this morning began consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the coordination of United Nations humanitarian emergency assistance.

Discussion focused on the Secretary-General's proposal to appoint a high-level coordinator to assist him in responding to emergencies, the establishment of a central emergency revolving fund and the need for a strengthened early warning system.

In other action, the Assembly decided to add to its agenda an item entitled "Financing of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia" and allocated it to the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly also elected the nineteen States to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) for a six-year term beginning 1 May 1992. The 36-member Commission, which began work in 1968, was established by the Assembly to promote the harmonization and unification of the law of international trade.

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The Assembly's Sixth Committee (Legal) today approved without a vote a draft which would have the Assembly call upon all States to act as good neighbours in their dealings with other States and when taking decisions that could affect them. The text, which was presented by the Chairman, would also have the Assembly express the conviction that good-neighbourliness was best fostered when all States respected the rule of law.

Among those addressing the Committee, the representative of Tanzania, Jerry E.J. Mburi, said his country had serious doubts about the usefulness of an exercise aimed at good-neighbourliness. He pointed out the impracticality of persuading States to follow certain patterns of conduct and at widely varying geographical characteristics and historical backgrounds.

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Without chemical procedures there would be no cocaine, and without the complicity of the international financial mechanism, there would be no drug trafficking. This view was expressed by the representative of Colombia, Fernando Cepeda. in the Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) this morning as it began its discussion of narcotic drugs. He proposed that the United Nations draft an international convention on the reduction of demand for illicit drugs because a synchronized effort to combat drugs was necessary.

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A meeting to focus on ways and means to address the enormous needs of disadvantaged South Africans in the humanitarian, social, educational and development fields began today in Geneva.

Attended by representatives of some 40 national and international organizations from various regions, the two-day meeting has been organized by the Special Committee Against Apartheid and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and anti-apartheid movements.

The purpose of the meeting is to assess activities and programmes in light of the changing political climate in South Africa and to continue coordinating support for the political process in South Africa during the transition period.

As a result of their last consultations, held in October last year, NGOs and anti-apartheid movements issued a plan of action to provide a framework for mobilizing international public opinion and to promote action to secure rapid progress towards the creation of a united, non-racial democratic South Africa.

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